



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

November 10, 2014

Dear Chief State School Officer:

In July, Secretary Duncan announced our Excellent Educators for All initiative, designed to move America toward the day when every student in every public school is taught by excellent educators. As part of the initiative, consistent with section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), each State educational agency (SEA) must submit to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) a State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators (State Plan) that ensures “poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers.” Your State Plan is due on **June 1, 2015**. The Department is extending the original deadline in order to provide ample time for your State to conduct meaningful consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including students, teachers, unions, non-profit teacher organizations, principals, district leaders, parents, civil rights groups, and other key stakeholders. Obtaining meaningful input from stakeholders is vital to creating high-quality plans and for setting the stage for successful implementation of those plans.

To support you in this challenging work, the Department is providing a number of tools that we hope you will find helpful.

- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):** The purpose of the guidance—*State Plans to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators*—is to help each SEA prepare a comprehensive plan that meets the requirements of ESEA section 1111(b)(8)(C) and helps ensure that all students have equitable access to excellent educators.
- **Data Files:** A high-quality State Plan starts with a data-driven analysis of existing conditions. To facilitate this analysis, today, November 10, 2014, the Department will send each SEA a data file that includes (1) data from the 2011-2012 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC); (2) school level student poverty rates; (3) “Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT)” data; and (4) a geographic cost of living adjustor. The CRDC data include comprehensive school- and district-level data, disaggregated by race, sex, disability, and limited English proficiency status, reported by districts to the Department. Metrics include, among other things: teacher experience; teacher absenteeism; teacher certification; access to preschool and rigorous course work, including science, mathematics, and Advanced Placement courses; and school expenditures. The Department is also sending supporting documentation, including a data dictionary and codebook, to facilitate your use of the data files. These files will all be sent to your State’s EDFacts coordinator through the Department’s Partner Support Center.

The Department is providing these data as a resource to help inform the development of your State Plan, but States are not required to use these data. Instead of or in addition to these data, you may choose to use data collected by your State. In developing your State

Plan, I encourage you to consider not only the optimal data to depict existing inequities in access to excellent educators (for instance, data on teachers rated as effective or teachers with at least one year of experience), but also other variables or sources of information that provide insights into the root causes of those inequities (for example, data on teacher satisfaction, working conditions, principal stability, or salaries).

- **Educator Equity Profiles:** Using data *found in the file described above*, the Department developed *Educator Equity Profiles* that compare certain teacher characteristics in high- and low-poverty schools, and in schools with high and low concentrations of minority students, in your State, disaggregated by district and urbanicity. As with the data file described above, the Department is providing these profiles as a resource and an example of how you might present data analyzing differences in teacher characteristics between schools across your State for purposes of developing your State Plan. Your State Plan must include a data-based analysis of equity gaps, but this profile is only one example of the type of data and data analysis you may use. I encourage you to supplement the Educator Equity Profile provided by the Department with your own data and analysis.
- **Webinars:** The Department invites you and your staff to participate in a series of upcoming webinars that will provide additional information and support as you develop your State Plan:
 - State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators: November 17, 2014, 3:00pm EST
This webinar will provide SEAs with information about preparing a State Plan to ensure that all students have equitable access to excellent educators.
To register for this webinar, please use the following link:
<https://educate.webex.com/educate/j.php?RGID=rb3826a9f84d48099d28475640fa39559>
 - Understanding Your Educator Equity Profile: December 1, 2014
This webinar will provide SEAs with a deeper understanding of the educator equity profiles and will provide a forum for Q&A with Department staff who developed the profiles. Registration information will be coming soon.
 - Understanding your Data: December 9, 2014
This webinar will help SEAs better understand the large data file described above, and will include discussion of how a SEA might use it to inform its State Plan. Registration information will be coming soon.
- **Equitable Access Support Network:** The Department invites you to take advantage of our new Equitable Access Support Network (EASN), designed to support SEAs and districts as you develop and implement your State Plan. The EASN is a partnership between national and local experts, and between analysts and practitioners, designed to address your State's individual needs, share promising strategies, and develop tools and model plans. The EASN will offer a voluntary pre-submission review process designed to provide State-specific feedback on draft State Plans prior to submission. More details

about the EASN will be forthcoming; if you have questions, please contact EASN@ed.gov.

We look forward to working with you and your team and appreciate your efforts to ensure that *all* students have access to excellent educators. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Monique M. Chism, Director, Office of State Support (OSS), at Monique.Chism@ed.gov. Thank you for your continued focus on enhancing education for all students.

Sincerely,

/s/

Deborah S. Delisle
Assistant Secretary